



# STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Internal Communique ■ State Schools for Severely Handicapped

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*Information concerning other available resources, programs, etc., is not to be construed as an endorsement by State Schools for Severely Handicapped for any specific product, organization or philosophy.*

## Essential Skills and Task Analysis

by Merv Blunt, Central Office

There is a difference between a task analysis and identifying essential skills. A **task analysis** identifies the sequence of the skills in a step-by-step breakdown of specific responses necessary to complete a motoric behavior or task (Teaching Resource Guide – SSSH Curriculum). It is used to identify the teaching progression or as a method to teach a specific essential skill.

**Essential skills** are critical abilities the student must have to be proficient in daily-life activities. Essential skills are generic in type and nature of response. The sequence in which essential skills are taught is not crucial to success. They may be taught in isolation or in skill clusters. Essential skills do not identify specific items to use but can be taught using a variety of materials.

One way to identify essential skills is to examine a task analysis of an activity/task and identify the essential skills that occur in the step-by-step breakdown. From the list of essential skills, the

teacher can decide which essential skills the student already has and which essential skills need to be taught. (See the example below.)

To teach this goal, the teacher has decided to use backward chaining. Backward chaining prompts the student through all the steps of the task analysis until the last step, then the student completes the last step without prompts or cues. The student may need to have prompts faded to accomplish the last step, but he or she will eventually complete the step without prompting. The same format is followed for the next to the last step and so forth, until the student can perform all the steps without prompting.

The student may be accomplishing the steps of the IEP goal (e.g., drinking from a cup) at an appropriate rate. However, at step 4 (e.g., lift cup), the student is having difficulty. The teacher needs to decide if the correct essential

*(continued on page 2)*

### Student Drinking from Cup (IEP Goal) (Targeted Application)

Task Analysis (teaching method)	Essential Skill
1. Locate cup on table	Scanning, object identification, object function
2. Reach for cup	Position in space, arm extension
3. Grasp cup	Grasping, eye-hand coordination
4. Lift cup	Directionality, grasping, eye-hand coordination
5. Bring cup to mouth	Flexing joint (elbow), position in space
6. Tilt cup	Position in space
7. Lower cup from mouth	Directionality
8. Put cup down on table	Position in space, releasing an object

# FROGGIE FACTS

by Janet Arnold, Teacher, Current River State School

Students at Current River State School recently took a leap into learning. The lesson was developed from the lesson box prepared for the October staff development drawing. The students practiced skills related to communication, science and health/P.E. in a fun-filled, exciting lesson titled Froggie Facts. The Froggie Facts lesson was adapted from *The Mailbox*, June-July 1999, Vol. 5, No. 3.

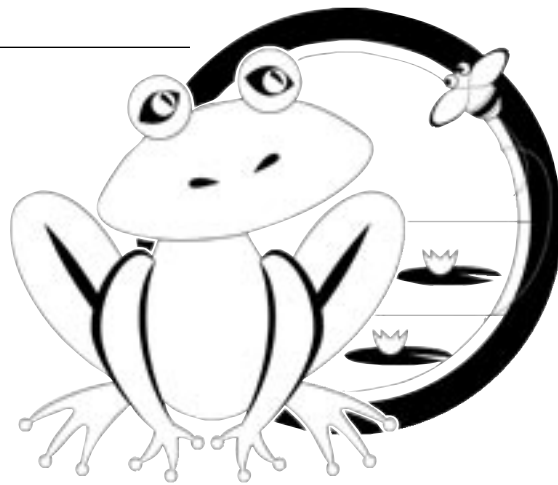
With the assistance of Ms. Ribbit (a very cute stuffed amphibian) and older students from Ms. Freeman's young adult class, the elementary students learned where frogs live, what they eat and how they get around.

The students helped Ms. Ribbit jump by tossing her to a numbered lily pad. Then the students jumped in

place the number of times indicated on the lily pad. As an adaptation to the lesson, some of the students clapped their hands or stomped their feet the number of times indicated by their toss.

Mrs. Arnold then read the book *In the Small, Small Pond* by Denise Fleming. The students took turns locating the frog embedded in each page of the book. They also had a croaking contest!

As the final learning experience, the students found out what it is like to dine frog-style. They each got a party blower with Velcro attached to the end. Laminated bugs with Velcro attached were placed in front of each student. Students were instructed to use their "frog tongues" by blowing the party



blower and aiming right to catch a "bug delight." After catching their snack, the students enjoyed some "frog grog," also known as lime Kool-Aid, to wash down the bugs.

Through this lesson, the students were provided with the opportunity to work together on several IEP goals, including listening, counting, communicating and taking turns. ♦

## Essential Skills & Task Analysis

(continued from page 1)

skill is being taught. Does the student need to learn directionality, grasping or eye-hand coordination? If the wrong essential skill is taught (e.g., grasping instead of eye-hand coordination), the student will remain at step 4 and never accomplish the IEP goal. Once the essential skill of eye-hand coordination is taught, the student is able to accomplish step 4 and move up to step 3.

From the task analysis, look at the specific skills that occur step by step, and then identify the essential skills. Then decide what essential skill or skills you will be teaching the student. If it is important the student learn to drink from a cup, the essential skills selected should build toward this goal. By teaching an essential skill and not the activity,

the student has more opportunities to practice the essential skill, be successful and generalize it to other activities and environments.

If the student is unable to accomplish all the essential skills necessary to drink from a cup in one year, you can build upon the essential skills in a logical manner until the student is ready to learn how to drink from a cup and can accomplish this in an IEP implementation period. That would be the goal and the targeted application.

### Targeted Application (formerly Concluding Essential Skill)

A targeted application is when several essential skills are used in a specific series to complete a particular task or activity that occurs in the student's everyday life. A targeted application is a practical skill that occurs in a very limited environment and uses only a specific piece of material or piece of equipment.

Typically during an IEP meeting, a goal is suggested for the student. The IEP team must decide if it is an essential skill or a targeted application. If the goal is a targeted application, the team must decide if the student has all, most or some of the essential skills needed to accomplish the goal. The team decides to either teach the targeted application or develop IEP goals/benchmarks for the essential skills. The IEP team should never teach an essential skill without having developed a long-range goal or targeted application.

The concept of essential skills and targeted application is a process that allows the teachers at SSSH to develop more practical and instructional-based IEPs for students. By following the essential skills process, students at SSSH are given many more opportunities to participate successfully in meaningful activities and tasks that will impact their everyday lives. ♦

## Preparing Students for Off-Campus Instruction

by Teresa Nations, Teacher,  
Shady Grove State School

### Ideas for Fast Food Restaurants

One activity I prepare my students for is eating out. I have picked up the actual food wrappers, cups, condiments, bags, etc. from various fast food restaurants. The restaurants will usually give them to you for free and wrapped as if they were the actual prepared food items. Also, these restaurants will often give you menus.

In the school setting, we do a lot of role-playing. I give my students a predetermined amount of money, which could be paper money, coins or a combination of both, and they will pretend to go to the restaurant. The teacher, aide or other students can act out the role of the person who is waiting on them. We will role-play the entire process of going out to eat:

1. Enter restaurant
2. Walk to counter
3. Look at menu
4. Waitress/waiter will ask if they can help ("Welcome to [name of restaurant], what would you like?")
5. Place order, then answer questions if any (size of soda, etc.)
6. Waitress/waiter will tell the student how much they owe
7. Round up or count exact amount of money, etc. (for some students who are just beginning instruction in money, I may just say 5 cents, etc.)
8. Wait for change
9. Wait for food
10. Give an appropriate response, such as "Thank you"
11. Gather items necessary for

eating meal: straw, napkin, ketchup, etc.

This can be varied for any individual needs, such as using communication devices or only working on one skill. Sometimes you can vary the lesson, such as not having enough money for the item purchased, etc. It is also good to vary restaurants, and sometimes you can work on a breakfast menu at the same restaurant. Have fun varying to fit your student's individual needs.

### Ideas for Grocery Stores

When a student is going to go shopping at a grocery store, you may begin in the classroom by talking about names of different grocery stores in your community, recognizing their printed names and even talking about where each store is located.

Then talk about sections of the store, including what food items will be in each location. Work on this by discussing food items in the freezer section, produce, canned goods, meat, etc. I have also gone to the stores and written down the aisle markers so the student can begin working at school on understanding that they can read the aisle markers to decide what items will be where. Many of our students have never looked above the aisles before and understood why these markers exist. This was a lot more involved and complicated than I thought it would be, and, of course, it varies by store and changes more often than I thought. (This may not be appropriate for many students.) It is possible to set up a room at school with cans and boxes and role-play shopping until the student is ready to take a learned skill into the community.

Before an off-campus instruction trip, we look at grocery lists that a

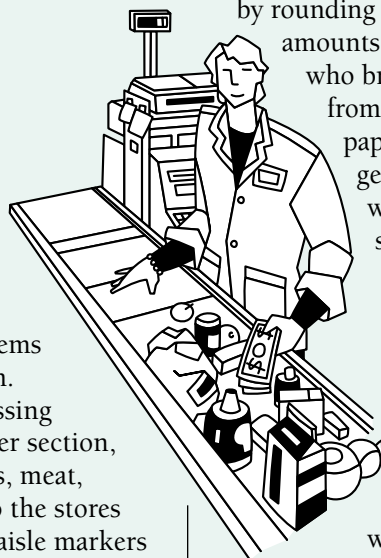
parent writes down (I prefer this), but it can also be a list the teacher makes up. We then scan the advertisements and find the prices. The student can write down the price of each item on the list. Then the student will add up all the items on the list using a calculator. Some of our students can add without a calculator. Using advertisements can also be complicated because many stores list items priced as a group, such as "2 for \$5." I usually will not begin with items listed like that, and I try to find items that are listed singly.

After the student adds up the money, they may practice counting out the appropriate amount of money by rounding up, counting exact amounts of money, etc. Students who bring a list and money from home usually bring paper money only. It is generally best to begin with rounding up when starting to purchase items in a store. After a student progresses, you may want to start counting change.

Shopping can be very complex and confusing for our students, and, as the world progresses, it may become more so.

Students need to role-play shopping and practice the various skills in the community frequently to attain all or most of the skills they will need in the future.

It is best to talk with the parents to see what they actually expect their child to be able to do. Many parents are surprised by how much their child really can do and will begin to give them more opportunities to shop when they are in the community with their child. I really encourage parents to let their child be the one who reads the list, locates some items and handles the exchange of money. It is best, of course, to start with only one item that the family will probably use on a weekly basis, then progress from there. ♦



## Using OCI Trips to Generalize a Variety of Skills

by Kaye Freeman, Teacher-in-Charge,  
Current River State School

At Current River, we use off-campus instruction (OCI) to teach a variety of skills. One example is using grocery store and variety store sites to teach skills such as greeting adults appropriately, bilateral hand usage and to walk following a set route.

A student may greet staff members appropriately in the school setting. However, students need to be taught greeting skills that include adults the students may not know in the general community. For example, a student may say "Hi" or wave to staff members, but at the local grocery store or in a restaurant, the same student may hug people they do not know. As a teaching activity in the school prior to OCI trips, we show students pictures of family members and explain that it is appropriate to hug these people.

Bilateral hand skills can be used in the grocery store to push the cart for a family member who is shopping. This is more socially acceptable than the parent carrying the student or the student riding in the cart. Prior to leaving for the OCI site, the student may transport items around the school or school parking lot by pushing a cart.

When walking, a student may not generalize how to move around local stores or restaurants. For example, standing in line to order pizza prior to being seated is a useful skill because one must know the set route required to successfully place an order. Skills taught prior to leaving for the OCI site include practicing waiting in line to do things at school because waiting is usually a part of any shopping or restaurant experience. ♦

## A New Twist for Off-Campus Instruction

by Pat Scheidt, Supervisor  
for Instruction

Our students are taught benchmarks and goals through various teaching strategies and adaptations within our State Schools. This occurs in multiple settings with a variety of people and materials. However, there reaches a point when the teacher determines that the students need opportunities out in their community for generalization of learning to occur. It is difficult for our students to switch from one person, place or thing to another. That is why opportunities for generalization of learning are identified in the IEP and accomplished through off-campus instruction (OCI).

Jean Major, primary teacher at Boonslick State School, has a simple yet effective way of ensuring that "instruction" is the operative word in off-campus instruction.

Before anyone gets on the bus for a trip outside of school, Ms. Major gives support staff an enlarged, typed, highlighted copy of the goal and/or benchmark for that day. She gives ample opportunity for staff to ask questions and gives needed demonstrations before embarking. Sometimes, if time permits, staff will switch students during the instruction time to teach more than one goal or benchmark in more than one setting while on OCI.

Let's look at a goal for students who need instruction outside of the classroom on focusing and tracking.

**Goal 1:** The student will show sustained visual focusing and/or tracking. (75% opportunities for 3 seconds)

**1-1:** The student will sustain focus on objects presented at midline.

**1-2:** The student will sustain focus on object in the left visual field.

**1-3:** The student will sustain focus on objects in the right visual field.

Ms. Major explains that staff will

take the student to a section in the store with lots of lighted or shiny objects. Staff are to present the object slightly above eye level for this student, allow the student processing time and note the student's visual focus for 3 seconds. The student receives eight opportunities for 3 seconds each in the left visual field (1-2).

Ms. Major gives staff a copy of the benchmark with criteria and directions. If time permits, halfway through the generalized learning session, the staff switch their students. Staff note the number of successes to review with the teacher back at school and the objects the student focused on or tracked.

Success is tested in different locations with different staff to ensure response is generalized. If one staff person has better success with the student than another, then the style of presentation is examined. Did we learn that this student needs staff to be more laid back rather than a cheerleader? Or vice versa? Did we learn this student needs more practice back at school with larger, shiny objects in a darkened room? Or did we learn the student is ready to go on to benchmark 1-3?

Ms. Major lets the family know the successes of the student in the community in case the family wishes to give their child opportunities to use the new skill when taken out.

This method of preparing for an OCI trip ensures that all staff who participate know exactly what they are supposed to do and how to do it. It also provides the students with more learning opportunities with professional staff.

When OCI trips are prepared or reviewed in this way, the teacher and support staff can zero in on student progress and why it occurred. The teacher may learn something invaluable about an adaptation or approach that was used with success. This could then be incorporated into classroom simulation instruction before the next scheduled OCI trip. ♦



## OFF-CAMPUS INSTRUCTION

### Bus Scheduling

by Stephanie Brooks, Central Office

After the new bus contract in August 2004, questions were raised about effective ways to use off-campus instruction (OCI). The following ideas are offered to classroom teachers and principals as a checklist to review when discussing off-campus instruction and planning OCI trips during the year:

- The IEPs provide for generalized off-campus instruction and do not limit the school to using one specific location to practice IEP skills.
- Use the closest appropriate locations for practicing the IEP benchmarks or skills.
- The locations chosen should be the same or similar to those used by the student's family (i.e., restaurants, stores, etc.). Discuss this with each family at the IEP meeting.
- To ensure a skill is generalized, it should be practiced in more than one location and preferably with different staff members.
- Each skill or benchmark should be practiced at school until the student is ready to move to a community setting.
- The amount of instruction time at the location should justify the journey time.
- The purpose of the trip is to provide instruction and give students a chance to practice. Staff should focus on this and have a method to report the number of opportunities presented to the student, the outcomes and the contributory factors relating to success or failure.
- When a skill is achieved consistently, it is time to move onto the next skill until the goal has been achieved. When this occurs, OCI trips are no longer needed for that goal.
- Analyze trips undertaken taken by the school for a number of years. Do these still provide genuine opportunities for integration or instruction? If not, discontinue them as soon as possible.

### Planning Trips

Most schools have an effective plan of notifying the bus contractor of OCI needs a week or month in advance. These are some factors to consider when setting up trips:

- The area office can supply each school with the current costs for OCI bus and attendant travel time and wait time. This varies considerably between the schools, and each school should calculate whether it is more cost-efficient to 1) have a bus make one journey to one or two locations, wait, and then return with the students to school, or 2) use the bus on a continuous travel loop between the school and various locations. In some instances, using wait time is more cost-effective.
- If wait time will be extensive, the school has the option of dismissing the bus and having it return later. In calculating costs, the school will pay travel time to return the bus to the terminal or starting location and for the return trip to collect the students from the location. Often it is less expensive to just have the bus wait.
- If a bus is waiting, it must remain at the location ready to return the students at any time. If school staff notice the bus has left, this should be reported to the school office, and no wait time will be paid.
- Each school should have a system for reporting absent students to the school office early each morning so that trips for those students can be cancelled before the bus arrives. This also applies if a student becomes ill during the morning and has an afternoon trip scheduled. If trips are not cancelled before the bus leaves the terminal, there is a charge for the trip.
- On three days' notice, schools can request a large bus to accommodate larger trips and avoid using two or three buses for the same activity. If a school regularly operates large trips (typically for swimming or bowling), it is important to use one bus. ♦

## Celebrity Read-In

by Ruthie Davis, Principal,  
Shady Grove and Crowley Ridge  
State Schools

On Nov. 9, 2004, Crowley Ridge State School celebrated National Young Readers' Day with a Celebrity Read-In. Area celebrities were invited to the school to share a story or book with the students. They also shared with the class how reading is essential in their everyday lives.

- After reading a story, Al Blanken, fire chief, gave some good tips on fire safety.
- Local radio personality Steve Mattingly explained that reading was vital in his job.
- Rainbow the Clown, Lisa Sayer, showed the students how to make balloon animals and shared that she had to read the directions to learn how to make balloon shapes.
- State Senator Rob Mayer read to the students the book *House Mouse, Senate Mouse* by Peter W. Barnes and Cheryl Shaw Barnes, which explains how laws are made.

Some of the other area celebrities visiting and reading to the students were:

- Joe Webber, mayor
- Connie Halcucraft, Dexter Public Library
- Herman Morse, retired Dexter principal
- Tony Rushin, Pizza Hut Teacher Debby Allen, and teacher aides Tarie Harris and Elaine Launius are to be commended for the effort and time involved to make this presentation a huge success.

The importance of reading was emphasized to the students in a fun and meaningful way. ♦

## HUMAN RESOURCES

### DESE Ambassador Awards Program

by Becky Kempker, Central Office

In the future, the service awards for State Schools' employees will be recognized through the DESE Ambassador's service certificate award rather than by a separate service certificate issued by SSSH. These awards will be sent to the schools quarterly to be presented to employees.

The employees noted below have anniversaries falling in the last quarter of 2004. They were acknowledged at the DESE Ambassador's ceremony in January 2005. Congratulations to all of these employees for their dedicated service.

#### 5 Years Service

Glenda E. Allen, *Area I Office*  
Marilyn Bell, *Parkview*  
Debra L. Brown, *E.W. Thompson*  
Frances Crone, *B.W. Sheperd*  
Tina L. Dougan, *E.W. Thompson*  
Karla K. Eccles, *B.W. Sheperd*  
Kimberly D. Galloway, *Shady Grove*  
Judy A. Gibson, *Mapaville*  
Joyce A. Magill, *Shady Grove*  
Karen D. Merritt, *Helen M. Davis*

#### 10 Years Service

Dana L. Flournoy, *Maple Valley*  
Theodore M. Geer, *B.W. Sheperd*  
Joyce A. Humphries, *Autumn Hill*  
Michael A. Perkins, *Area III Office*

#### 15 Years Service

Beverly J. Cox, *Mapaville*  
Cynthia M. Enloe, *Kirchner*  
Donna L. Grosse, *College View*  
Cindy L. Jeffries, *Mapaville*  
Deborah A. Johnson, *Gateway/  
Hubert Wheeler*  
Vernie D. Lindsey, *Current River*

Gewanda Shockley, *Gateway/  
Hubert Wheeler*  
Shirley E. Smith, *Oakview*  
Joyce L. Thompson, *Ozark Horizon*

#### 20 Years Service

Sheila M. Blankley, *Gateway/  
Hubert Wheeler*  
Kevin D. Gipson, *Mapaville*  
Barbara J. Jones, *Trails West*

#### 25 Years Service

Ernestine M. Gathing, *Gateway/  
Hubert Wheeler*  
Karen L. Long, *New Dawn*  
Deborah A. Sanderson, *Mapaville*

#### 30 Years Service

Regina B. McElroy, *Parkview* ♦

### Financial Relief Available to State Employees

by Cheri Landers, Central Office

The Committee to Aid State Employees Inc. (CASE) is Missouri state employees helping fellow state employees. CASE is not a state agency. It is a nonprofit Missouri corporation organized by volunteers who are also state employees for the exclusive benefit of Missouri state employees.

CASE was established to give temporary financial relief to state employees who have experienced a catastrophic illness, injury or event. It is designed to ease the financial burdens of the state employee until a more permanent solution can be found. Applications are reviewed and processed by the Grants Committee on an ongoing basis. In most cases, a determination is made within 10 days.

A catastrophic illness or injury is defined as a state of health that is life-threatening, terminal or likely to result in a substantial permanent disability to an individual who is or was a state employee at the time of the illness or injury. A catastrophic event is one that

results in a substantial and potentially ruinous financial expense to an individual who is or was a state employee at the time of the event.

Any person employed by the state of Missouri who earns a wage or receives compensation for working at least 1,000 hours per year, including elected or appointed officials such as the General Assembly, is eligible to apply for assistance.

CASE is funded solely by contributions from Missouri state employees who designate CASE as the recipient agency on their Missouri State Employees Charitable Campaign form. Recipients are not required to repay CASE. It is truly a charitable donation.

For more information, contact CASE at P.O. Box 341, Jefferson City, MO 65102. Telephone: 1-888-753-CASE [1-888-753-2273]. ♦

### Shared Leave

by Cheri Landers, Central Office

Thanks to the employees who donated their surplus annual leave to the shared leave pool last October. These donations were appreciated very much. The shared leave pool received 2,676 hours from donations in November 2004.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Shared Leave Program uses annual leave and compensatory time donated by DESE employees to a department pool to provide additional paid leave to employees who have exhausted all their accrued leave. This additional leave is available in situations where the employee or employee's spouse or children have experienced a personal illness or injury that is life-threatening, catastrophic or results in a potentially permanent disability. Shared leave may only be received while the condition is considered life-threatening or until long-term disability is received.

To apply for shared leave or make a donation of hours to the pool, check with your supervisor for an application or donation form. ♦

# Making Black History Come Alive

by John Zid, Teacher, and Mary Throckmorton, Teacher Aide, Skyview State School  
(with additional books suggested by Ruthie Davis, Principal,  
Shady Grove and Crowley Ridge State Schools)

AT SKYVIEW STATE SCHOOL, we take the month of January to celebrate and learn about the contributions of many African-Americans. Included in our discussions are individuals who have made or are making contributions in every aspect of American life. We focus on those making the news today as much as possible (e.g., Colin Powell, Dr. Condoleezza Rice and Tiger Woods).

One of our students has reading goals in her IEP, so she does most of the reading to her ability level. Several students have making choices as IEP goals, so they select which person we will learn about the following

day. Another student has a goal of responding accurately to a “yes” or “no” question, so we ask a very simple question, such as: “Does Tiger Woods play baseball?” or “Is Janet Jackson a great dancer?”

We also listen to music by African-Americans during the month as much as possible, and we include Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have A Dream” speech. During the month, each student keeps a folder to color a copied picture of each individual studied and to take the folder home at the end of the month. This assists those who have fine motor skills listed as an IEP goal.

## Suggested Reading Materials

### ■ *Famous Faces: Noble Black Americans*

By Edupress, Inc., W5527 State Road 106, P.O. Box 800, Fort Atkinson WI 53538-0800  
([www.edupressinc.com](http://www.edupressinc.com)) \$7.99 for the series

This is a series of large educational cards with high-quality pictures of the person on front and a short biography on the back. The series consists of eight different cards and includes individuals in varied occupations (e.g., politics, sports, music).

### ■ *Celebrity Readers Series*

- *Famous Female Musicians*
- *Famous Male Musicians*
- *Famous Male Sports Stars*
- *Famous Female Sports Stars*

By Remedia Publications, 15887 North 76th Street, Suite 120, Scottsdale AZ 85260  
([www.rempub.com](http://www.rempub.com)) \$6 for each book

Each of these books contains articles on at least two well-known African-Americans along with a worksheet on each individual.

### ■ *Happy Birthday, Martin Luther King*

By Jean Marzollo, Scholastic Hardcover, [www.scholastic.com](http://www.scholastic.com)

### ■ *Martin’s BIG Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

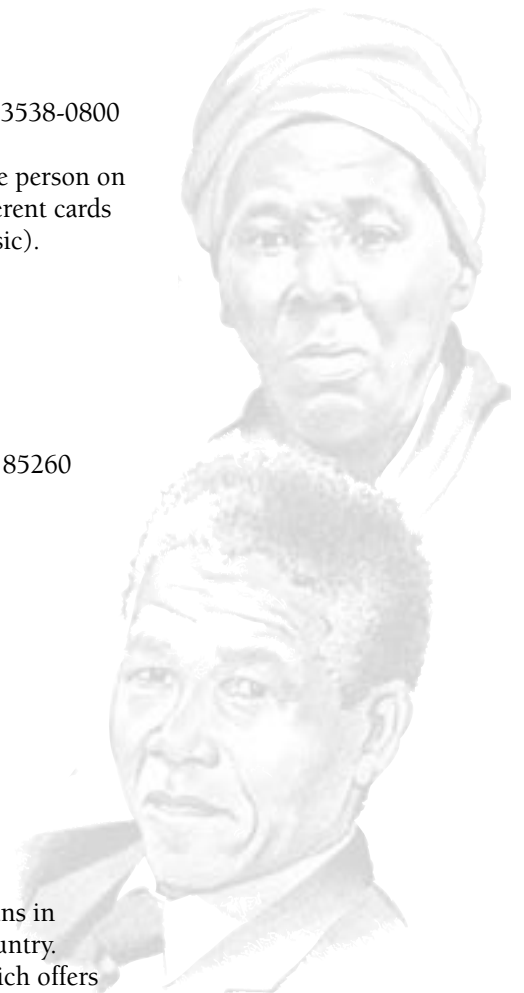
By Doreen Rappaport, Hyperion Books for Children

### ■ *African Americans Who Made a Difference*

(Some schools may have copies of this book, which is now out of print.)

By Scholastic Professional Books

This book contains 15 plays with easy vocabulary about African-Americans in history who were important in almost every occupational field in our country. Some of these plays can be downloaded from the following Web site, which offers various resources on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and African-American history:  
[teacher.scholastic.com/researchtools/articlearchives/honormlk/index.htm](http://teacher.scholastic.com/researchtools/articlearchives/honormlk/index.htm) ♦



## Fifth Disease – What You Should Know

by Claudia Rampley, Central Office

Fifth disease (also called erythema infectiosum) is caused by parvovirus B19, which is a human virus. It is not the same parvovirus that veterinarians may be concerned about in pets, especially dogs, and it cannot be passed from humans to animals or vice versa.

Anyone can be infected by this disease, but it seems to occur more often in elementary school-aged children. People who spend a lot of time with children are more likely to be exposed to the virus. The virus is spread by exposure to airborne droplets from the nose and throat of infected people.

Outbreaks of fifth disease can happen any time of the year but most often occur in winter and spring. Symptoms of fifth disease generally appear four to 14 days after exposure to the virus.

Fifth disease in children generally follows a certain pattern. Some develop mild, cold-like signs and symptoms, such as sore throats, slight fever, upset stomach, headache, fatigue and itching, early in the illness.

Several days later, a distinctive red facial rash usually appears on both cheeks. Eventually, the rash may extend to the arms, trunk, thighs and buttocks, where the rash may have a pink, lacy, slightly raised appearance. The rash from fifth disease usually lasts one to three weeks.

In adults, the most prominent symptom is joint soreness that lasts days or weeks. Joints most commonly affected are the hands, wrists, knees and ankles. Fifth disease can also occur without any signs or symptoms in both children and adults.

Because fifth disease is a mild illness, many adults may not be aware that they have had it, especially because many people do not have symptoms. About 50 percent of adults

have had the infection, have antibodies to the virus and are immune. These antibodies prevent future infection.

Individuals with fifth disease are most infectious *before* the onset of symptoms and are no longer contagious after the development of the rash.

The diagnosis of fifth disease is made on the basis of a medical history and physical examination. When an exact diagnosis is important, the healthcare provider can order an antibody titer blood test.

Fifth disease is usually a mild illness that resolves on its own among children and adults who are otherwise healthy. Children usually feel well and are back to normal activities by the time the rash appears.

Some people are at higher risk of complications or serious illness if they get fifth disease. This includes unborn fetuses of pregnant women who develop fifth disease and children and adults with immunodeficiency or chronic blood disorder. Consult your healthcare provider if you are exposed to fifth disease and you are at higher risk of complications.

If an outbreak of fifth disease occurs in the school, notify all parents/guardians of students, pregnant staff and staff with impaired immune systems or blood disorders.

Provide additional instruction to staff on how to decrease risk of spread of the virus. Discuss good hand-washing techniques for staff, and instruct staff to make sure students wash their hands frequently as well. Remind staff to cover their mouths when coughing and sneezing, and instruct staff to work with students to do the same. Make sure appropriate disinfection of the building occurs.

Excluding persons with fifth disease from work, child-care centers or schools is not likely to prevent the spread of the virus because people are contagious before they develop the rash.

Fifth disease is a very contagious viral disease. There is no vaccine or other way to prevent it. Use general precautions every day, including frequent hand washing, avoiding the respiratory secretions of others and thorough building disinfection. ♦

## Shirt Covers

by Janelle Burch, Supervisor for Instruction

Students at Current River State School are always fashionable in their shirt covers made by staff and friends of the school.

In an attempt to move away from bibs, aprons, towels and other traditional articles for clothing protection, the idea was generated to take a sweatshirt or T-shirt (both are popular items for any school-aged child) and make it easy to put on and take off so it would not have to be pulled over the student's head.

The answer was to cut it up the back, hem the raw edges and place Velcro fasteners as needed along the edges. This gives the appearance of a regular shirt while providing protection from food spills while eating. For extra absorbency, a good idea is to sew a towel on the underneath side of the shirt.

Directions for making the shirt covers:

1. Cut down the back of a sweatshirt or T-shirt from the neck to the bottom of the shirt.
2. Hem each side to prevent raveling.
3. Place Velcro down the back of the shirt at the neck, in the middle of the shirt and at the hem.
4. Decorate the front with an age-appropriate design.

Shirts are sometimes found on sale or donated. Those without decoration can be used as an art project where students participate in painting, tie-dyeing or putting on appliques. Supply is ample enough that the students may even choose one that matches their outfit each day.

Students may put these shirt covers on before going to lunch, and they are easy to wash and fold. Those students learning home living skills can participate in keeping the supply clean and ready to go.

Hats off to Current River for their creativity in providing age-appropriate alternatives. ♦



## TECHNOLOGY

### Adapted Tricycles

by Janelle Burch, Supervisor for Instruction

Adapted tricycles (three-wheeled bicycles) are being used for instruction in many of the SSSH locations. Some schools have more than one model. Tricycles are available from several of the companies that market adaptive equipment; Rifton and Flaghouse have been popular sources. Different sizes are available, and a variety of accessories and supports allow the tricycles to be customized for use by almost any student. Some models offer a guide bar to encourage new riders, which enables the instructor to guide and pull while the child learns movement and balance. There are models available that use the regular rotary motion and models that use a back-and-forth, walking type of motion. The cost runs from \$700 to \$1,200 depending on the model ordered and the accessories and supports that are chosen to provide the best, most appropriate fit for the student.

Training in appropriate use of the tricycle usually begins when the teacher accesses instruction from the physical education teacher and sometimes support from the physical therapist. The tricycle can be used as an instructional method for teaching IEP goals, such as learning appropriate leisure skills, achieving better balance, developing attending and focusing skills, and for motor planning as the student advances to guiding the tricycle around obstacles. Students learn the left-right rotary motion that helps develop motor patterns to support beginning walking skills. Additional benefits include the use of big muscles for significant levels of sensory feedback and a decrease in self-stimulating behavior as they learn to keep their hands on the handlebar.

There are multiple opportunities to practice the skill in different settings. The student can ride down the school hallways, in the gym or commons area, and outdoors on the playground or

sidewalk. Self-esteem and confidence increase as the student experiences a new freedom and becomes more independent in all of the skills involved.

Some parents have purchased an adapted tricycle for use at home. This is a skill that will carry over to family or community activities and has been known to develop to the point where the adapted tricycle is not needed. Some students move on to a regular three-wheeled bicycle.

If you don't yet have an adapted tricycle at your school, look through the catalogs and decide how your students could benefit from learning the skills needed to ride. Those who use them for instruction have found them to be motivating and fun, and they help students achieve in their total educational program. ♦

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Career Ladder Plans for 2005-2006

by Stephanie Brooks, Central Office

This annual program is available to State School educators with five years' service in Missouri public schools, at least one of which is with State Schools, and who are evaluated at or above the successful level on all criteria of the performance-based evaluation. The purpose of the program is "to enhance student performance through increased effectiveness in teaching." Plans focus on instructional improvement, professional growth and improving transition services. Educators work on their plans outside regular school hours.

Educators start at Stage I and can progress to Stages II and III as they meet the criteria. It is necessary to work 60 hours to complete the requirements for Stage I, 90 hours for Stage II and 120 hours for Stage III. The payment per stage for completion of an approved plan is: Stage I – \$1,500, Stage II – \$3,000 and Stage

III – \$5,000, subject to annual funding by the legislature.

Minor changes that have been made to the 1996 Career Ladder Guidelines will come into effect in 2005-2006. Copies of the new guidelines will be released to the schools, to educators who anticipate writing a 2005-2006 plan and to the committee members as soon as the changes are approved. Updated editions of the Educator's Handbook and Committee Member Handbook will be released at the same time. The Career Ladder forms will not change this school year.

To give educators new to Career Ladder some ideas of activities, here are details from some of this year's plans:

#### Instructional Improvement

- Make four original board or card games relevant to student goals with applicability to visual impairment or adaptation for use by switches.
- Make three tactile books with recorded stories.
- Develop 10 adapted P.E. games.
- Coach and take students to a Special Olympics event (various sports).
- Develop a computer technology manual to explain computer hardware and software programs to other educators and help them troubleshoot problems.

#### Professional Growth

- Read the latest strategies in P.E.; summarize four articles and implement in the school.
- Attend in-services from the Blind Skills Program and write up strategies for use in classroom.
- Attend conferences specific to speech or physical education.
- Develop a resource book on effective classroom management techniques.

#### Improving Transition Services

- Observe local workshops for currently needed skills and develop at least four activities that will help students practice the skills in the classroom.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Attend a conference on transitioning young adults and implement the ideas in the classroom.
- Set up a grooming learning center for young adults.
- Investigate the leisure activities at local Day Habilitation Centers and set up five related activities at school.

Each area has a career ladder committee of educators to oversee the plans, and all the committees strongly urge SSSH educators to consider submitting a plan for the coming year. If you are interested in submitting a plan for 2005-2006, contact the appropriate area committee chairperson not later than March 31, 2005, and let her know the stage you expect to be on. The committee can provide guidance on completing the application forms.

The current chair people are:

**Area I:** Susan Hagen, *Maple Valley*  
(816) 436-7747

**Area II:** Kathy Moreland, *Dogwood Hills* (573) 392-5593

**Area III:** Reggy McElroy, *Parkview*  
(573) 290-5799 ♦

## Tuition

### Reimbursement

*by Stephanie Brooks, Central Office*

In July, 2003, the criteria for tuition reimbursement changed and some SSSH employees were no longer eligible to receive reimbursement. This article is intended to clarify eligibility for the current reimbursement program.

Tuition reimbursement is available for:

- Any staff member on the teachers' salary schedule with a bachelor's degree who wishes to take a master's degree in the area of education (special education or education administration)
- Any staff member on the teachers' salary schedule who is completing required coursework to obtain a full

teaching certificate (teachers holding a temporary authorization certificate or provisional teaching certificate)

- Any staff member who is required to take coursework to obtain or maintain required licensure or certification (mainly applicable to principals and school supervisors).

The reimbursement is available for full-time, non-probationary employees and is generally limited to \$2,000 per fiscal year. Additional details about claiming reimbursement can be obtained from the Official Bulletin Board posting at your school or by looking in the Staff Development section of the Administration and Instruction Guidebook, available in the teachers' room at the school.

For questions about this program, contact Stephanie Brooks at (573) 751-0706. ♦



*Making a positive difference  
through education and service*

## Questions & Answers

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Have questions about any of the topics covered in this newsletter?

Need to know more about instruction, equipment, health issues for students, human resources or any other topic that pertains to your job?

We will answer them in this section. Forward questions to Stephanie Brooks in Central Office.

## Physical Education – Dance

*by Janelle Burch, Supervisor for Instruction*

A few years ago, Karen Long, physical education teacher, introduced a dance unit at New Dawn State School in an effort to incorporate IEP skills into a fun, instructional activity. What began with a small group of students has grown into an educational program that encompasses students of all ages and ability levels.

### Dance Program

As the students are introduced to the program, Ms. Long reviews the IEPs to identify individual skills that will need to be taught. Then she plans the lessons, choosing music that is popular and motivating, and choreographs the movements to meet the motor needs and capabilities of each student in the group. During seasonal times of the year, she chooses a song with a holiday theme.

As the program begins, students do warm-up exercises to music and begin to learn and practice skills such as following a pattern, walking, rolling, moving their own wheelchairs, turning circles in wheelchairs, walking in circles, changing directions, extending arms, reaching and listening as staff model the motor movements and provide assistance to those who need it. Although Ms. Long uses many different types of music, the dance hits of the '60s, '70s and '80s are ever-popular.

Ms. Long chooses a song that seems to get a good response from  
*(continued on page 11)*

## **P.E. — Dance**

*(continued from page 10)*

the students; this song will be used long enough for the students to learn the routine, which could include moving in and out of a circle; counting (8-count); marching movements; moving forward and backward; reaching; arm movements and arm exercises; clapping hands side to side, overhead and between legs; bending; stretching overhead; twisting side to side; and crossing midline. This is just a small example of all the movement sequences that could be included in one song.

Ideally, the schedule is set up so that the groups meet three times a week. The first time each week, smaller groups combine to meet as a large group and review the positioning and movements required for completion of the dance routine. Twice a week, the large group is divided into smaller groups to learn and practice individual skills. Dance units are included in physical education throughout the year with the introduction of different routines and songs. Students learn quickly to imitate movement patterns and changes in direction of movement as they observe staff and other students.

### **Adaptations**

Ms. Long includes many adaptations to help students experience success in participating in the group instructional lesson. Plastic stars and/or dots are placed on the floor, and the students are instructed to find a particular color. Plastic arrows on the floor will give visual cues to indicate the direction of movement, such as moving in and out of a circle pattern. This will indicate where the student will stand at the beginning of the dance.

### **Benefits of the Program**

The consistency of this program throughout the years has been rewarded in terms of high levels of student participation and achievement. Some students are introduced to this

group to learn socialization skills and how to cooperate in a group. Students who were unenthusiastic and reluctant to participate in the beginning have become more excited and are moving more and more to the upbeat music. They are watching the other students and staff and have become familiar enough with the routines that they have more confidence to explore the movement activities more enthusiastically. Even students who don't like to participate in physical education activities will usually get involved.

Ms. Long noticed that this has been a great opportunity for those students who are not interested in sports. Dancing is a more free type of exercise that allows the students more creativity in movement. In the routines that are planned, she often reserves a short time spot for "create your own movement." This instructional activity seems to keep students on task and hold their attention.

### **In the Home**

After completion of one dance unit, videotapes were made of the students who were participating. Each student took home a copy that they could watch, share with their family, and use to participate in the dance movements as a leisure activity in the home. There have been positive reports from families receiving the video stating that the students enjoyed watching and seeing themselves. Parents have been able to carry this activity into the home and help the student maintain these skills.

### **Extending the Program to Classroom Instruction**

Teachers have begun to take advantage of this instructional unit as an extension of instruction into their classrooms. Candy Birdsong, the primary I teacher, includes in her daily classroom schedule a time at the end of the day when the students have a fine arts lesson in dancing and movement to music. Friends from the classroom across the hall are invited to participate.

These young students look forward to this time of day and love the challenge of following directions and responding as the teacher guides them through a variety of movements that allow them to learn and practice skills targeted in their IEPs.

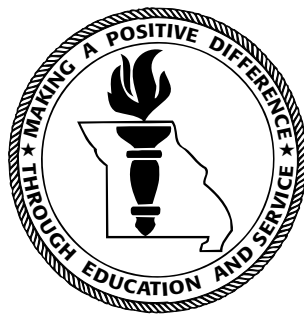
Staff and students from the rest of the school have developed an exercise program for a video that incorporates music and movements. This program focuses on the same skills as the dance program, and students have generalized comfortably into this exercise program that is offered daily for those who choose to participate.

### **Age-Appropriate Leisure Activity**

Dancing is definitely a skill that will carry over into adult life. Many adult agencies sponsor dances, and our students will feel comfortable and competent to participate and have a good time when the music starts. The skills are generalized first in the school dances that are held on special occasions throughout the school year. An extension of the generalization of skills occurs as the students attend the prom each year and show off their capability to participate in a social activity involving other friends, classmates and people of the community. It is impressive to hear "YMCA" begin and note that most of the school's students are on the dance floor performing and enjoying themselves immensely.

Staff are highly involved and thoroughly engaged in this program, which has influenced the enthusiasm and success of the students who are beginning to choose exercise as a leisure activity. The noncompetitive nature of the program seems to make it attractive to many who previously avoided such activities.

The dance unit has proven to be one of the most successful physical education units because so many students can be involved, and data supports that learning is occurring through this skill-driven activity program. ♦



STATE SCHOOLS FOR SEVERELY HANDICAPPED  
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and Secondary Education

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Web site: [dese.mo.gov/divspeced/stateschools/](http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/stateschools/)

**NOTE:** If you have items of interest for the *Staff Highlights*, please call 573-751-0706 (Missouri Relay 800-735-2966) or forward them to: Stephanie Brooks, State Schools for Severely Handicapped, P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480.  
E-mail: [Stephanie.Brooks@dese.mo.gov](mailto:Stephanie.Brooks@dese.mo.gov)